

REMARKS

The Examiner is thanked for the due consideration given the application.

Claims 1-34 are pending in the application. Withdrawn claims 35-47 have been canceled in the Amendment filed July 12, 2007. Support for the amendments to claims 1 and 18 can be found in the specification at page 10, lines 22-25. Claim 2 has been amended to improve the antecedent basis in a non-narrowing fashion.

No new matter is believed to be added to the application by this amendment.

Rejections Under 35 USC §103(a)

Claims 1, 16-18, 33 and 34 have been rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over SOKEI et al. (U.S. Application No. 2003/0115097 A1) in view of SCHWAB et al. (U.S. Application No. 2002/0019777 A1). Claims 2-15 and 19-32 have been rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over SOKEI et al. in view of SCHWAB et al., as applied to claims 1 and 18, and further in view of ROMAN et al. (U.S. Publication 2002/0010634 A1). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

The present invention pertains to a method of buying back goods, e.g., computers, with improved efficiency. The present invention is illustrated, by way of example, in Figure 2 of the application, which is reproduced below.

FIG. 2

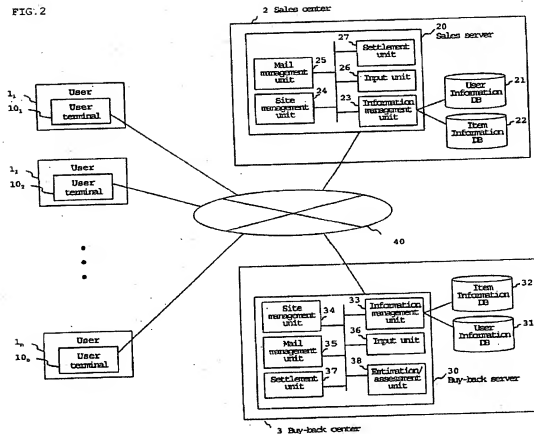
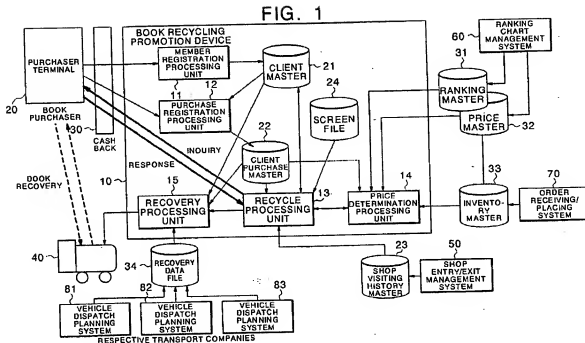


Figure 2 depicts a sales center 2, a buy-back center 3 and at least one user 1_n, which are interconnected by network 40. Claim 1 (and similarly independent claim 18) of the present invention recite: "wherein said sales center, said buy-back center and said user are interconnected by said network."

SOKEI et al. pertain to a book recycling promotion device that recovers books *in situ*. The book recycling promotion device of SOKEI et al. is illustrated in Figure 1 of the reference, which is illustrated below.



The Official Action refers to paragraph [0033] of SOKEI et al., which states:

The book recycling promotion system comprises a book recycling promotion device 10, a terminal 20 to be used by a book purchaser (hereafter, purchaser terminal), and a network 30 which connects the book recycling promotion device 10 and the purchaser terminal 20. ***It performs actual recovery (or collect) of books and cash back operations (payment for the books bought) by a recovery company 40 according to the result of management processing at the book recycling promotion system. (Emphasis added).***

It is clear that the recycling technology of SOKEI et al. pertains to a single device, and there is thus no need to utilize a network. The Official Action tacitly acknowledges this failure of SOKEI et al. at page 3, lines 3-4, stating: "Sokei et al. do not explicitly teach a method/system for buying back goods, comprising a sales center for marketing target goods."

The Official Action then turns to SCHWAB et al., which pertains to return of merchandize through third party locations. However, the third party location would change the principle of operation of the device of SOKEI et al., in which the recycled book is collected *in situ*.

If the proposed modification or combination of the prior art would change the principle of operation of the prior art invention being modified, then the teachings of the references are not sufficient to render the claims *prima facie* obvious. *In re Ratti*, 270 F.2d 810, 123 USPQ 349 (CCPA 1959).

Also, adding the teachings of a third party location of SCHWAB et al. to the recycling device of SOKEI et al. fails to disclose or suggest the network interconnection of user, sales center and buy-back center, such as is set forth in independent claims 1 and 18 of the present invention. The applied art of ROMAN et al. fails to address these deficiencies.

A *prima facie* case of unpatentability over independent claims 1 and 18 has thus not been made. Claims depending upon claims 1 and 18 are patentable for at least the above reasons.

These rejections are believed to be overcome and withdrawal thereof is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

The Examiner is thanked for considering the Information Disclosure Statement filed May 4, 2007 and for making an initialed PTO-1449 form of record in the application.

Prior art of record but not utilized is believed to be non-pertinent to the instant claims.

The rejections are believed to have been overcome, obviated or rendered moot, and that no issues remain. The Examiner is accordingly respectfully requested to place the application in condition for allowance and to issue a Notice of Allowability.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

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